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revised. The matter is stated incorrectly in the *Life of Lope de Vega*, p. 13 n. Montalván declared that this was Lope's first play in three acts.

Perro (El) del hortelano. The proverb is more correctly: *Como el perro del hortelano que ni come las berzas ni las deja comer á otro* (Covarrubias).

Pobreza (La) estimada. R. says: "In the concluding verses the alternative title is given as *La Riqueza mal nacida*." Is it?

Prisión (La) sin Culpa. Tristán is a 'gracioso.'

Tres (Los) Diamantes. Allow me to do some proof-reading: "En fin ya somos casados [read: *cuñados*]. At this point Crispin comes forward with the question—"Quien llama?" This scene [read: *this one line*]—as far as the words . . . should be placed earlier [read: *later*], as at the end of [read: *in*]. . . ."

Vaquero (El) de Morana. Why insert pedantic misinformation from Sarmiento?

Virtud, Pobreza y Mujer. R. says, "The comedia must have been written after July 25, 1607, the date of Pedro Liñan's death." As it also refers to the expulsion of the Moors, it must have been written after 1609-1610.

MILTON A. BUCHANAN.

University of Toronto.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT IN *Le Père Goriot*

Émile Faguet in his volume on Balzac¹ criticizes the novelist for his lengthy descriptions, while assenting to his theory (as set forth in the preface of *La Comédie Humaine*, 1842) that character is the product of environment so far as to say (p. 60) *qu'il est essentiel pour faire connaître l'animal humain de me décrire son habitat et que la maison explique l'habitant*. He goes on to say, however, that often Balzac's descriptions of dwellings do not explain characters, taking as an illustration *Le Père Goriot* and its extended description of Mme. Vauquer's boarding-house:

Les personnages essentiels du *Père Goriot*, sont Goriot, Rastignac et Vautrin. Tous les trois sont à la pension Vauquer par suite des circonstances et la pension Vauquer n'a eu et n'a aucune espèce d'influence sur leur caractère et, par conséquent, est absolument

¹ Émile Faguet, *Balzac*, Paris, 1913, p. 59 f.

inutile. La maison Vauquer n'explique uniquement que Mme Vauquer. Balzac dit lui-même: "Toute sa personne explique la pension, comme la pension implique sa personne." Oui bien, mais il n'y a qu'elle que la pension implique ou explique et elle est le personnage le moins important du roman. Dès lors la description est inutile. (P. 60.)

But it is not the correspondence of Mme Vauquer with her environment that is the most important application of Balzac's theory in this novel. The Maison Vauquer and its inmates are a portion of the environment of young Eugène de Rastignac, whose changing fortunes divide with the sorrows of Old Goriot the attention and sympathy of the reader. Balzac's older characters do not change when once their habits of life have become fixed. In the novel in question it is not Mme Vauquer, Old Goriot and Vautrin who develop, it is Eugène. Arriving unspoiled from the provinces, he has his eyes opened to Parisian life, and his life purposes and interests change as he becomes aware of the luxuries of life and the accepted means by which they were procured in the society of which he had recently become a part. It is by contrasting his home life and the Maison Vauquer with the elegance and comfort in which Mme de Beauséant, Mme de Restaud and Mme de Nucingen lived that he came to make his definite resolve to make his way in the world and procure for himself the same material satisfactions they possessed.

Eugène began, like other students, by envying the luxury of the occupants of the carriages on the Champs-Élysées, and by comparing it with the simplicity and financial distress of his own family in the provinces (*Le Père Goriot*, Lévy edition, p. 26). The first result, a very transitory one, was to arouse him to work: *Il s'était mis sous le charme d'une fausse énergie en voyant les splendeurs du monde* (p. 27). It was at Mme de Beauséant's that he caught his first glimpse of a luxurious interior: *Il allait donc voir pour la première fois les merveilles de cette élégance personnelle qui trahit l'âme et les mœurs d'une femme de distinction* (p. 56). Its effect upon him was immediate: *Le démon du luxe le mordit au cœur, la fièvre du gain le prit, la soif de l'or lui sécha la gorge* (p. 59). Returning to the Maison Vauquer, the importance of whose detailed description is now apparent, he was struck by the disagreeable contrast, and his ambition received a new impulse:

Arrivé rue Neuve-Sainte-Genève, il . . . vint dans cette salle à manger nauséabonde, où il aperçut, comme des animaux à un râtelier, les dix-huit convives en train de se repaître. Le spectacle de ces misères et l'aspect de cette salle lui furent horribles. La transition était trop brusque, le contraste trop complet, pour ne pas développer outre mesure chez lui le sentiment de l'ambition. D'un côté, les fraîches et charmantes images de la nature sociale la plus élégante, des figures jeunes, vives, encadrées par les mer-

veilles de l'art et du luxe, des têtes passionnées, pleines de poésie; de l'autre, de sinistres tableaux bordés de fange, et des faces où les passions n'avaient laissé que leurs cordes et leur mécanisme. . . . Rastignac résolut d'ouvrir deux tranchées parallèles pour arriver à la fortune, de s'appuyer sur la science et sur l'amour, d'être un savant docteur et un homme à la mode (p. 70).

Mme de Béauseant invites Eugène to dinner, and the contrast again overwhelms him:

Mais, en voyant cette argenterie sculptée, et les mille recherches d'une table somptueuse, en admirant pour la première fois un service fait sans bruit, il était difficile à un homme d'ardente imagination de ne pas préférer cette vie constamment élégante à la vie de privations qu'il voulait embrasser le matin. Sa pensée le rejeta pendant un moment dans sa pension bourgeoise; il en eut une si profonde horreur, qu'il se jura de la quitter. . . . (pp. 103, 104).

His final conversion to the doctrine of material success comes with his establishment as Delphine's lover in the apartment which her father has furnished for them:

Il avait continuellement hésité à franchir le Rubicon parisien. . . . Néanmoins, ses derniers scrupules avaient disparu la veille, quand il s'était vu dans son appartement. En jouissant des avantages matériels de la fortune, . . . il avait dépouillé sa peau d'homme de province, et s'était doucement établi dans une position d'où il découvrirait un bel avenir (p. 190).

It was therefore the effect of the contrast between his humble provincial home and impossible Parisian boarding-house, and the life of comparative luxury of which he had glimpses, that aroused the worldly ambition of Eugène de Rastignac and inspired him to utter the challenge expressed in his final words, spoken from the heights of the Père-Lachaise cemetery as he gazed down upon the fashionable quarter of the city: *A nous deux maintenant!* (p. 244).

STANLEY L. GALPIN.

Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.

VITZLIPUTZLI

I wish to add another note to my previous remarks on Vitzliputzli which have appeared in various numbers of the *Modern Language Notes*.

In some of the German puppet plays which dealt with the story of Faust, a Vitzliputzli seems to have been one of the stock figures. As appears from announcements of performances in different parts of Germany during the nineteenth century, he was variously represented in such plays as "one of the devils," "one of the spirits,"